United Nations A/61/660–S/2006/1015

General Assembly
Security Council

Distr.: General
21 December 2006

Original: English

General Assembly
Sixty-first session
Agenda items 17 and 27

Security Council
Sixty-first year

The situation in the occupied territories of Azerbaijan

Protracted conflicts in the GUAM area and their implications for international peace, security and development

Letter dated 20 December 2006 from the Permanent Representative of Turkey to the United Nations addressed to the Secretary-General

I have the honour to transmit herewith the unofficial translation of the statement made by the Ministry of Foreign Affairs of the Republic of Turkey on 10 December 2006, on the "referendum" held in the Nagorno Karabakh region of Azerbaijan, under occupation by Armenia (see annex).

I would be grateful if the present letter and its annex could be circulated as a document of the General Assembly, under items 17 and 27, and of the Security Council.

(*Signed*) Baki **İlkin**
Ambassador
Permanent Representative

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Annex to the letter dated 20 December 2006 from the Permanent Representative of Turkey to the United Nations addressed to the Secretary-General

Statement made by the Ministry of Foreign Affairs of the Republic of Turkey on 10 December 2006, on the "referendum" held in the Nagorno Karabakh region of Azerbaijan, under occupation by Armenia

(Unofficial translation)

Turkey took note that a referendum on a draft "Nagorno Karabakh Constitution" was held on 10 December 2006, in disregard of international law and the will of the international community, in the Nagorno Karabakh region of Azerbaijan, under occupation by Armenia. Turkey has been informed that, as a result of the so-called referendum and in accordance with the "Nagorno Karabakh Constitution", the Nagorno Karabakh region of Azerbaijan would be defined as the "Nagorno Karabakh Republic", with the attributes of a "sovereign, democratic, legal and social State".

Turkey does not recognize the outcome of this unilateral initiative, representing the flagrant Armenian invasion, in violation of international law, continuing on the territory of friendly and brotherly Azerbaijan. Turkey condemns Armenia's action, which constitutes a new violation of Azerbaijan's political unity, sovereignty and territorial integrity.

As a result of Armenia's continuing occupation of the Nagorno Karabakh region, representing 20 per cent of Azerbaijan's territory, together with the seven neighbouring administrative regions and in violation of international law, more than 1 million Azerbaijani people have become refugees or internally displaced persons in their own country. At a moment when the negotiations are being pursued within the framework of the Minsk Process to find a peaceful settlement to the Nagorno Karabakh problem and to the Azerbaijani-Armenian conflict, the undertaking of a "constitutional referendum" in the Nagorno Karabakh region under occupation constitutes an initiative undermining the efforts for a peaceful settlement.

With these considerations, Turkey calls upon the international community to condemn and not to recognize the outcome of the "constitutional referendum", which would have no binding effect whatsoever under international law.